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PUNCH



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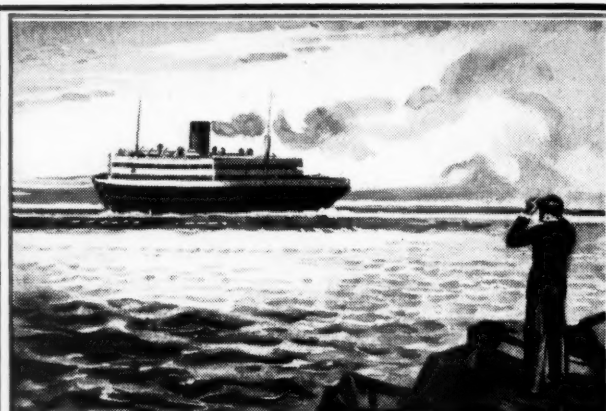
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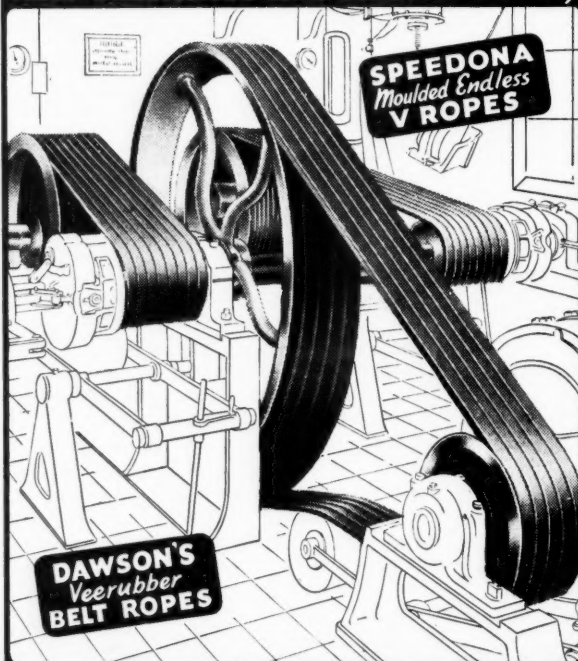
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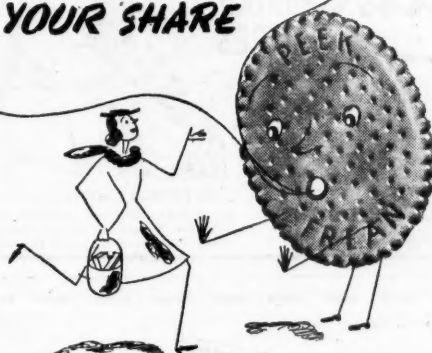
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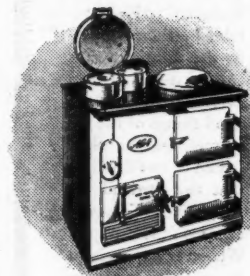
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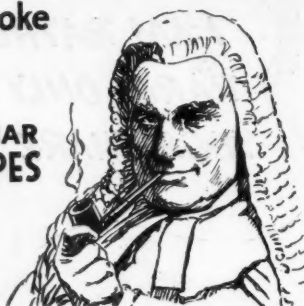
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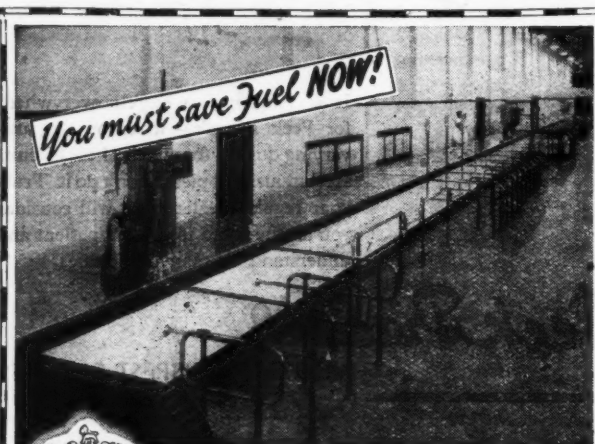
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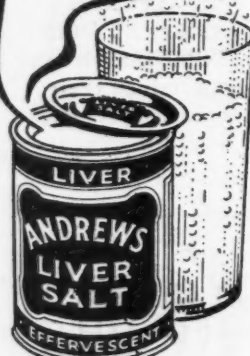
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FOR GIRLS AND BOYS

L.B. LTD. London

**Indifference to
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INDIGESTION**

GASTRIC TROUBLES are aggravated by over-straining the digestive organs with unsuitable food when, on the contrary, what they most need is Rest. Your disinclination to eat a full meal when you feel tired or worried is a sign that your digestion needs a rest. This is a natural and instinctive curative impulse. Obey it. Rest your digestion with a cup of Benger's Food. Benger's soothes the stomach and gives your digestion a chance to build up its natural strength. Yet it provides the warmth and nourishment your system needs but in a form you can fully absorb without discomfort or digestive strain.

Why Benger's is so good for you.



You could live on Benger's

Benger's is rich nourishment in a form which requires very little effort on the part of the digestive organs. It contains active enzymes which partially pre-digest milk so that you absorb the full value of this valuable food whilst giving your digestion the rest it needs.

Benger's, to-day, is as easy to make as a cup of cocoa. From all good chemists and grocers—The Original Plain Benger's, Malt Flavoured or Cocoa and Malt Flavoured.

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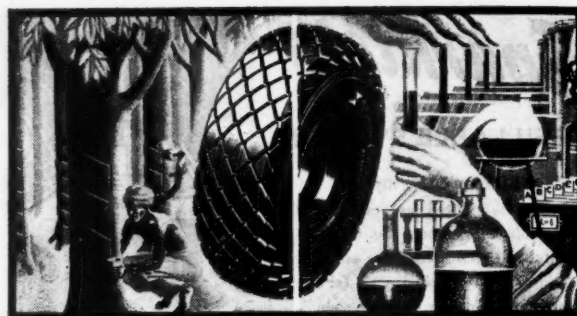


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IN BLACK, MILITARY TAN
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GOODYEAR'S "CHEMIGUM"

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tireless work lie behind Chemigum — Goodyear's synthetic product. But the story is not yet complete. The arrival of Chemigum has presented another problem — that of producing Chemigum at a rate that will help compensate for our big losses of natural rubber. Goodyear are concentrating their vast organising and producing experience to overcome this difficulty. Once again the name of Goodyear is being written large in the pages of progress.

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PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCIII No. 5302

October 7 1942

Charivaria

At a recent wedding a Northamptonshire bride refused to say "obey." Evidently one of those young women who try to avoid careless talk.

There is as yet no paper shortage in Hollywood. Nevertheless, film-directors envisage a time when they may have to use snow for snowstorms.

It is said that English baby talk puzzles a foreigner more than anything. The other day one of them, on a visit to the Zoo, explained to a compatriot that a cubicle was an icle cub.

Glass is scarce in Germany and may only be purchased privately when it is used to frame a picture of HITLER. A concentration camp is the next address of any citizen who buys a dozen large pictures of the FUEHRER and then repairs his cucumber frame.



An American who has just retired made his fortune by repairing silk stockings. He started at the bottom of the ladder.

A naturalist points out that the earth-worm is the amateur gardener's best friend. Will Mr. MIDDLETON take this lying down?

A London bus conductor can speak five foreign languages. Even such a modest number as this should be quite a help to a London bus conductor nowadays.



A housewife told a Food Committee that her grocer had run out of cheese. It was an unkind thing to say.

A centenarian said in an interview that the only time he was ever confined to his bed was when he sprained his ankle after slipping on a banana-skin. What a memory!

"A strange man tried to kiss me in the railway compartment," states a woman in a letter to the Press. It is not for us to dispute the epithet.

A broadcaster recently stated that England could be placed in the state of Texas and not be noticed. This would mean, of course, that a certain number of Scots would be marooned in Scotland.

Much of a Muchness

"CIVIC CINEMA, —
Charles Boyer & Margaret Sullivan
APPOINTMENT FOR LOVE (V)
also
MEET THE CHUMP (V)." *Hants Paper.*

"If a man cycles to business instead of going by rail he soon begins to notice a physical difference," says a doctor. Of course. He always gets a seat.



"Thierack was born at Wurzen, in Saxonia, fifty-three years ago, when he worked in the office of the Public Prosecutor in Leipzig."

Liverpool Daily Post.

What we are up against.

A neutral correspondent recalls having been present when HITLER rebuked one of his generals. They couldn't decide, we gather, which of them was to have the first bite out of the carpet.

Reverie at 8 a.m.

I CRAVE your indulgence—nay, I demand it—for returning once more to the subject of bathing and hot baths. I do not feel that the Government is taking the true, the manly line in this affair.

It was not surely by asking the British people to forgo the luxury of meat-eating that Lord Woolton made us carrot-minded, potato-conscious and beetroot-souled. It was rather by pointing out that potatoes caused us by their vitamins to be better men and more beautiful women, that the beetroot enhanced our love of literature and art, that only the eager vision of the carrot-fed could pierce the darkness of our night. We were becoming gross with mutton and besotted with beef. It was time that we shook off the trammels of obesity and emerged into a purer air, herbivorous, Argus-eyed and strong.

It should be so, I feel, with bathing and hot baths.

If Ulysses used much warm water on many occasions it was only when the siege of Troy was ended, and I need not comment on the fate of Agamemnon, Marat and the brides of Mr. Smith. The Spartans used cold water. So did the Athenians at their best. There were eight hundred and fifty hot public baths in the City of the Seven Hills during the latter days of the Roman Empire. And what happened? Where are the imperial years and where art thou, Faustine? The question has never been satisfactorily answered. It was in a cool bath that the Roman noble lay with haggard eyes, but after driving abroad furiously he then often returned to open his veins in a hot one. A hardier race swept away this effete civilization and hunted the bear in the gay parterre, as Gibbon has sung in his immortal poem.

Here in England the sturdy Saxon destroyed the elaborate villas of a sybaritic race; the rough kex broke their starred mosaic, interfered with the central heating and cut off the water supply. The hypocausts, the tepidaria vanished like the figments of a dream.

If you care to examine the ground plan of a Roman bath you will find that it consisted of about twenty different compartments with a plumbing system that only a professor of Latin can understand, and included an altar to the goddess Diana who really did all her bathing as privately as possible in a forest pool. The apodyterium, or undressing-room filled with warm vapour—but why should I continue to labour this unpleasant theme? It is all too reminiscent of the bad old days and of Colonel Blimp who brought us to our hour of sorrow.

Suffice it to say that between the time of the departure of the Romans and some slightly uncertain date in the nineteenth century the inhabitants of this precious stone set in the silver sea had no baths. Not hot ones anyway. There may have been exceptions. Very few of them were creditable. Nobody who has ever seen a woodcut of mediæval public baths, or has read what has been written about them, can avoid a sensation of nausea. I don't think the Normans bathed indoors. Perhaps as you say in boiling lead.

The original Knights of the Bath must have bathed? Once only, I think, at their induction ceremony—how different from the Knights of the Bath in 1939. If anyone can prove that any King of England from the reign of Henry III to the reign of Charles II ever bathed in a hot bath, and give me evidence as to the place, the temperature, and the depth of the water, I shall be glad to learn. Unwashed were the bowmen of Agincourt, unwashed the Ironsides, unscrubbed to a man. I am taking no bets

about Charles II because he had been corrupted by the bad French ways. *Balnea, vina, Venus*. . . Louis XIV once had a hot bath, but caught a bad cold, and never tried it again. A single experience of setting beneath the waves was enough for Le Roi Soleil.

The silence of English literature on the subject of warm water is so profound, so overwhelming that you can almost hear a tap drip. Shakespeare credits sleep with being sore labour's bath, but never says that sore labour had any other, nor does he suggest any means of removing blood-stains from the hands or balm from an anointed king except sea-water, and even that he considers ineffectual. Pepys saw people bathing at Bath? Did he ever have a bath himself? If he did, he would have said so. He doesn't.

I think that great Englishmen and lovely Englishwomen put away this thing from them. Ceremonial baths there may have been, medicinal baths, occasional plunges into a river or the sea. The sterling sense of the island ever understood that with hot baths came gradually but inevitably softness, decadence, decline. Did Dr. Johnson ever bathe? Did Bacon bathe or Lamb? I ask you as I have asked dozens of people what characters in the works of Jane Austen or Charles Dickens ever had a hot bath? Edwin Drood? What a pitiful, what an inadequate reply!

We know very well how fond Napoleon was of hot baths, and what came of it. Did Nelson bathe? You can see the little tin bath of Wellington (he used it outside the window) at Walmer Castle. But I think he used cold water, and I don't feel certain that he allowed himself even this mild effeminacy until he became Warden of the Cinque Ports. I can remember that the boys of a House at school which made cold baths every morning compulsory used to call the boys of other Houses who could use hot water "frowsty swine." Not a nice phrase? Well, it was worse than that really. Such and so strong have been Englishmen before the rot set in. Think of Pompeii. And now once again civilization has been tottering, standing on a cake of soap, trembling before its fall. But perhaps by cold water we shall be saved.

* * * * *

Very well, I will get up, then.

* * * * *

It was thus that, as I made my way to my humble apodyterium, thus that as I poured a teaspoonful of tepid water into my gelid tub, thus that I thought the Government campaign against useless bathing should run. They were merely random thoughts that came into my mind, they could easily be amplified, and Major Lloyd George can always ask me for more.

That is to say, if the miners won't get him any coal.

EVOE.

Without Comment

"Mr. Noel-Baker, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of War Transport, held out no hope in the House of Commons that road signs would be replaced until an invasion was imminent."

Monmouthshire Beacon.

To Whom It May Concern

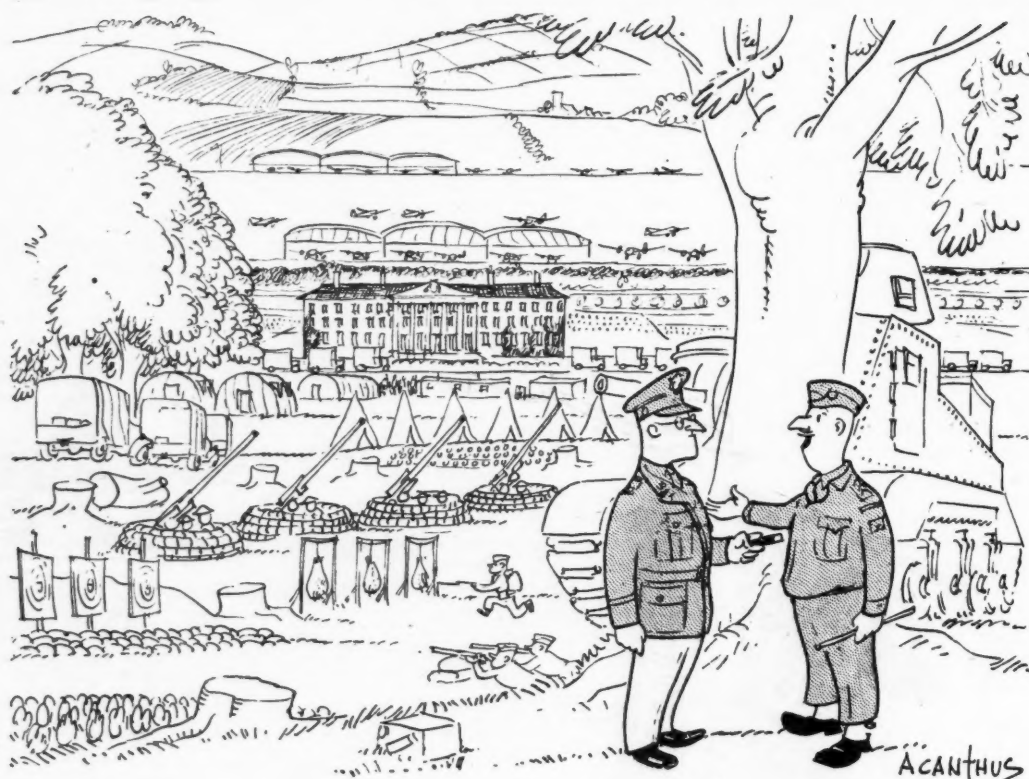
"WANTED

NEW or SECOND-HAND FORTY-GALLON COW or FARM BOILERS with or without shell."—Advt. in "Irish Times."



MEADOW AND MINE

"How's *your* harvest, mate?"



"Yes, you can tell them back in Oregon that you're staying at a typical English country seat."

The Camel

THE camel is probably one of the reasons why I'm still a subaltern while blokes who were acting unpaid lance-corporals after I got my commission are now getting round-shouldered from supporting the weight of all the pips and crowns and batons and things.

You see, the Colonel took a fancy to it one day when he was visiting one of those Italian Prisoner of War camps that litter up the base areas in Egypt. The Wops go in for sculpting and that sort of thing quite a bit in their spare time, and fill up all the available space with samples of their handiwork. Mostly their ideas centre on Roman centurions and gladiators, but one of them must have felt the lure of the East, because he'd turned out this camel. It wasn't what I'd call a first-class camel, because it sagged in the middle in a tired sort of way and listed slightly to starboard. Besides, it wore a rather timid apologetic expression

on its face, which was quite out of character, because even the scraggiest camel always looks immensely superior and condescending. However, the Colonel liked it and thought it'd look rather imposing under the flag-pole in front of his office, so he bought it.

The first I heard about it was when the Transport Officer came into my office in a very worried state because he'd received an order telling him to detail a three-ton lorry to convey a fatigue-party of ten men to the Prisoner of War camp and collect a camel. He said it sounded to him like improper use of W.D. transport, and it must be a very wild camel if it took ten men to handle it, and it'd probably kick the sides out of the vehicle or bite the driver on a sharp bend, and then there'd be a court of inquiry and he'd have to carry the can back as usual, and he didn't see why the infernal animal couldn't walk that short distance, and he didn't approve of

pampering animals. Having got all that off his chest he barged off again and detailed the lorry, and the camel duly arrived.

It was quite a hot day, so the fatigue-party, muttering darkly about having joined up to fight a something war, not shift something statues, dumped it inelegantly on its side and abandoned it. Then there arose the problem of allotting the responsibility for the erection and care of the camel to some particular department. Our three majors were approached first.

Major Youngbody, who is Chief Instructor and in charge of "G" branch, said that as the camel wasn't even anatomically correct it certainly couldn't be used for instructional purposes, and from the operational point of view it would be quite useless except as possible cover for a sniper. (By the way, for the benefit of civilians and others with logical and orderly minds, I ought to point out that the

Army obstinately insists that "G" stands for Operations.)

Major Hardcase, the boss of "Q" branch, admitted that equipment was a quartermaster's worry as a rule, but produced an awe-inspiring collection of papers to prove that camels, stone, were not included in the authorized inventory of stores on issue to static units in base areas and were therefore quite outside the scope of his department.

Major Pomp, who rules over "A" branch, said he would of course accept the Colonel's ruling on the matter, but he didn't see how camels, especially inanimate ones, could possibly require administration.

The ultimate decision was a foregone conclusion. After everybody else had turned the unfortunate animal down it became quite apparent that a man capable of being Welfare Officer, Mess Secretary, Sports Officer, Band Leader, P.A.D. Officer, Entertainments Officer, Censoring Officer and general company stooge all at once, couldn't possibly object to being appointed Officer i/c Camel, so I was formally handed the job and told to go ahead and erect it forthwith.

With my usual quiet efficiency I detailed the necessary fatigue-party, found myself a comfortable seat in a shady spot, and encouraged my men with many a cheery word while they built a pedestal and hoisted the camel into position. Then I waited to hear what was wrong with the job—and I hadn't long to wait.

Apparently the Colonel took it as a personal insult that the camel was facing away from his office. He seemed to think that a malicious plot had been hatched to deprive him of a view of the more attractive end of the beast. For a time it looked as if the blasphemous fatigue-party was going to be summoned once more to turn the animal about, but I had an inspiration. Looking slightly smug, I explained that I had purposely erected it in that position, because any brigadiers, generals or other celestial bodies who might visit us on a tour of inspection would necessarily approach from the far side of the pedestal, and a bad impression might be given at the very outset if their first view of the camp consisted only of the backside of a camel. The Colonel at last grudgingly admitted that there was reason in my argument, and changed the subject by giving the opinion that the camel needed a coat of paint. Obediently, I signalled to the Workshops Officer to make the necessary arrangements. He detailed a Private Slap, Coachpainter Class II, for the job.

Now, personally, I don't really blame Private Slap. I'm sure he meant well. My own theory is that he was a victim of repression. Since early childhood it had probably been his ambition to paint sunsets and Fighting Téméraires and Laughing Cavaliers and other colourful things, and his sense of frustration must have been awful when he came into the Army and got the job of camouflaging vehicles, which just consists of making everything look like everything else. To him that camel must have been as symbolical as the Statue of Liberty—his long-awaited chance to express himself in colour. He put everything he'd got into it.

The principal motif was canary yellow set off by some rather tricky work in subtle shades of sepia to give

lately by saying that he took it for granted that I'd know that it should be an ordinary camel-colour and that anyone with any experience would have done it that way without being told. I explained that we had no one on our strength who *was* experienced in painting camels, but he wouldn't listen to reason.

Blow-lamps were used, and the camel is now a uniform camelish sort of brown, but it hasn't quite lost all trace of its former greatness. There's still some indefinable something about it, a sort of debauched look, that suggests its faded glory.

I don't think the Colonel has ever quite forgiven me about that camel, and I'm sure Private Slap will never forgive the Colonel for obliterating the results of the only real work of art that the Army ever allowed him to execute.

SIRENS . . .

ONE never knows where the attack will fall, but when it does it is bound to mean that more people need the immediate help of food, clothing, money, hospital treatment and the wherewithal to carry on. *Punch*, through its COMFORTS FUND, endeavours to be a good neighbour to them all.

Will you please help us in the good work? We would be so grateful if you could send a contribution, however small. Donations will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie St., London, E.C.4.

a light-and-shade effect. The eyes were a deep, limpid, Mediterranean blue, soulful but twinkling roguishly. The lips were a vivid shade of crimson (I believe Coty's call it "Ravissante"). The *toute ensemble* endowed the camel with quite unexpected glamour, and it wore the air of one who had once been the Toast of the Regiment.

I wasn't actually present when the Colonel first saw it in all its glory, but I have it on reliable authority that he quivered like an aspen, uttered a choking sob, buried his face in his hands and wept like a child. However, he'd recovered by the time he sent for me and demanded an explanation. I pointed out respectfully that he hadn't specified what colour he wanted the camel to be. That held him for a moment, because he couldn't quite describe the colour that he thought it ought to be, and he got out of it rather

The Red Lion

REARED on a lofty wall
He stood admired by all
The long years through,
A lion in his pride
O'er Thames' reflecting tide
Near Waterloo.

Red was his hue, and stiff
His gallant tail as if
To bid men cheer
Up, and to let them know
That in the vaults below
Was stout and beer.

And when the villain blitz
Knocked all beneath to bits
(No beer, no stout)
He still remained unbowed,
Unmoved, and stuck his proud
Appendage out.

You that have seen him there
With his defiant air
Above the wrack,
Did you not straitly feel
A stirring of new zeal
Run up your back?

Did you not think he'd stay?
I did, I'm bound to say,
But he has gone,
And we deplore his loss
While Thames by Charing Cross
Moves sadly on.

But my prophetic eyes
Can see him newly rise
In his old place,
Standing above the town
And mirrored upside-down
On Thames' calm face.

DUM-DUM.

Saluting As It Shouldn't

II

LAST week I was telling you about the M.P. who complained that in London to-day saluting was not being Done As It Should. We then discussed various forms of Saluting As It Shouldn't—particularly Selective Saluting. Here are some other types of salute which may be met with.

THE SALUTE IGNORANT

This of course is given by those who don't know any better to those who look what they aren't. Thus, a subaltern of the Brigade of Guards—who wears gold round the peak of his cap—is frequently taken by new and innocent infantry subalterns for some sort of rather junior general and gets obsequiously saluted—and often acknowledges it. Whether, however, he acknowledges it in order not to embarrass an equal in rank, or whether he acknowledges it as his due from the mere P.B.I. is rather moot.

The presence of foreign armies in our midst also increases the number of Salutes Ignorant. The Americans, for instance, are most difficult. When a young American brigadier, who wears one single star (in England the second-lieutenant's badge), passes an elderly British captain, wearing three stars (in America a lieutenant-general), it's very difficult to know who thinks he's saluting whom or acknowledging what, especially when both say "Good morning, sir." Probably some sort of simple Inter-Oceanic greeting would be best, such as "Hiya, mate!"—"Wotcheer, buddie!"

Of course the best of the Salutes Ignorant are those received by the commissionaires outside famous London hotels, who are always being mistaken for Free Azerbaijanian generals or the like. It's one of the ironies of life, by the way, that when you salute a commissionaire he ignores you contemptuously, but at the times when he salutes *you*, you can't ignore *him*; it costs sixpence or a shilling, depending on whether he's only held open a door or called a cab as well.

Once a Salute Ignorant has been made and realized as an error it is difficult to get out of. It needs quick thinking, such as hurriedly putting the hand up to the cap again, removing the cap and brushing an imaginary spider off the peak, as if that's what you were really aiming to do all along. Don't overdo this, however: people in the Services who deal in imaginary

spiders are rather frowned on as having doubtful war-effort value. A quick tongue sometimes helps, such as explaining with a friendly smile: "Touch of my old rheumatism," and then continuing to bend and flex the arm in a series of actions gradually less and less like a salute.

Beware of too quick a tongue though. A certain Lieutenant Holster once inadvertently saluted a very, very elderly captain, with medals almost back to Omdurman, standing motionless and lost in thought at a bus stop. The captain came to life and barked, "Don't you know a captain's not entitled to your salute?" Lieut. Holster replied, "No, but a corpse is." This in a way got him out of it, but he had to endure a lot of blistering invective—mostly Hindustani, but Tamil and Arabic came into it—and he swears that all traffic lights in range simultaneously went to red and stayed that way for seven minutes.

THE SALUTE COURTEOUS

This is really almost Selective Saluting, because it seems to be given for some special reason of the saluter's. For instance, an infantry sergeant walking down a quiet street with his arm round a blonde popsy will suddenly

straighten up, pop the dropsy—I mean leave go of the girl—and put on a big saluting act in the most amiable manner for a quite uninterested flight-lieutenant with the D.F.C. His reason is generally obscure. It may be he thinks highly of the D.F.C.; it may be the officer's face reminds him of someone; it may be he has recently cut out a member of the R.A.F. in the matter of the blonde popsy and is making vicarious amends; or it may be he just wants to do his good salute for the day. Anyway, over it comes—the Salute Courteous. It expresses an enormous affability coupled with a sort of unspoken message of "here's-you-and-me-and-what-a-game-it-all-is-why-in-civvy-street-we'd-probably-be-having-a-drink-together." It is frequently accompanied by a winning but quite unexpected grin. The whole thing has, indeed, an atmosphere of effusive but fleeting camaraderie only met with at Old School Dinners. This atmosphere, however, is soon dispelled by the popsy's very visible fury at being abruptly unlimbered and abandoned and—if she happens to be on the wrong side of her escort—getting her hat tilted over her ear by his elbow.

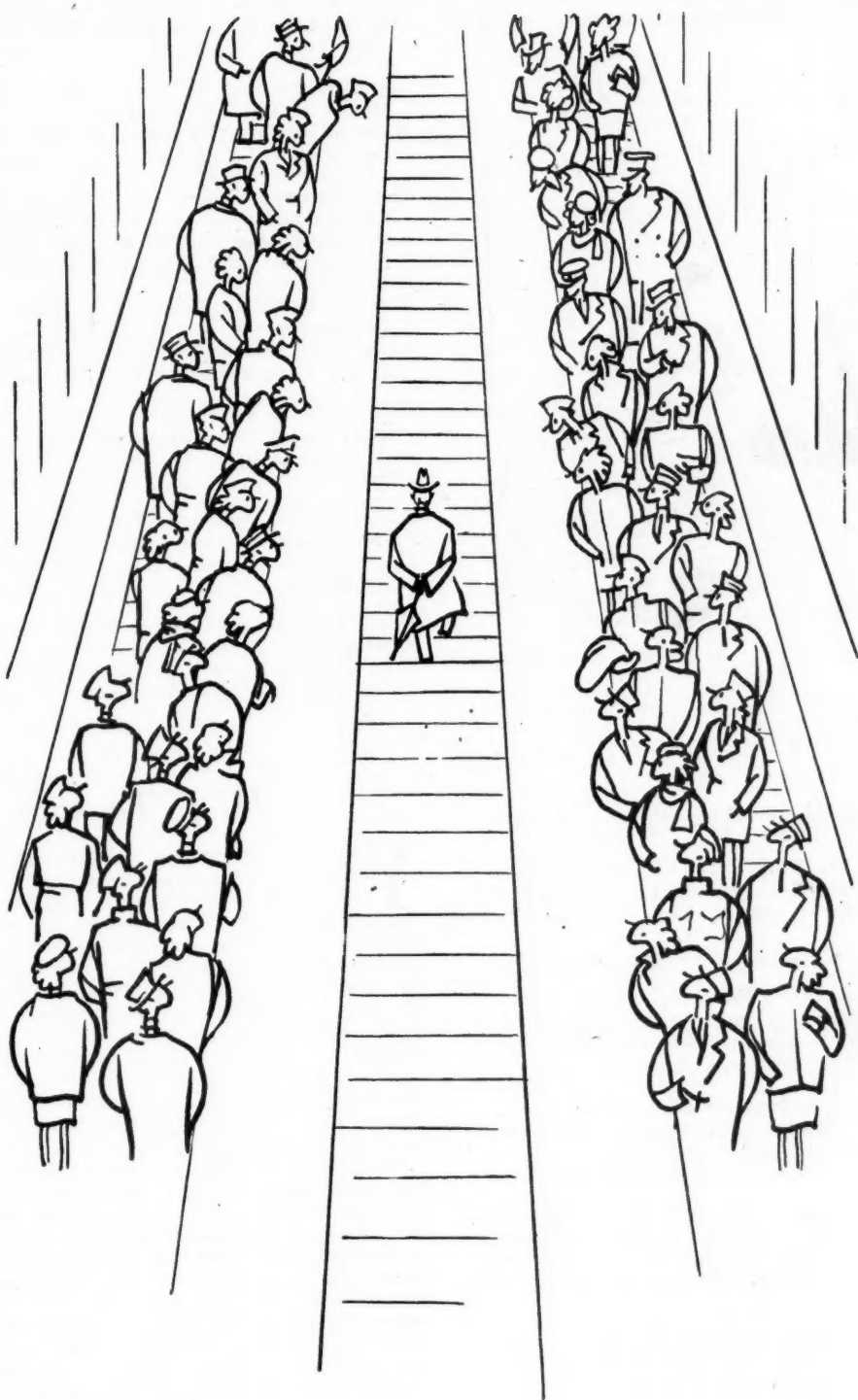
The Salute Courteous often passes between impressionable young Waafs and good-looking officers. Sometimes, if the officer is impressionable too, the acknowledgment comes before the salute. The girl can't do anything about this of course, such as handing him a freezing glance or giving him in charge. That's practically discourtesy to the King, and what the hell—we're only young once! The Salute Courteous is also given, excessively courteously, by sub-lieutenants, second-lieutenants, and so on to vice-admirals, major-generals and upwards, under whom they are serving. The general object of the exercise is accelerated promotion, but there's no reason to suppose it ever works. Indeed, if the general or what-not is carrying a heavy parcel for his wife in one hand, a heavy portfolio in the other hand, and a heavy liver somewhere in between the two, it may even work the other way. But we're getting a bit out of our class. See next week—The Salute Obsequious.

A. A.



"Now that we know that we are going to win I think it much better not to be too optimistic."

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



Fongaree

THE PATRIOT



"Je suis
Tu es
Il est . . ."

Travelling America . . .

TRAVELLING America, I am England-haunted.
I seek new landscapes out of the window of the train,
But wherever I look an England enlarged, trans-
planted,
Springs to my sight and carries me home again.

The clapboard house in a Massachusetts village
Is a weatherboard house in Essex. From both, men sail
To plough their lives away in a dangerous tillage;
In both, wives lie uneasy, an ear on the gale.

The Pennsylvania meadows are green and quiet
As Penn's own meadows three thousand miles away;
The cattle browse, and the honeysuckles riot,
And the streams run slow, and slow men cart the hay.

In Chesapeake Bay the woods come down to the water,
Feathery-soft in the moonlight as funeral plumes:
I think of a small mother with a well-grown daughter,
And remember the Devon coast and the wooded combes.

The Shenandoah Valley, the Blue Ridge lying
Beyond it, the sound of crickets and whip-poor-wills—
This is the valley of Avon, with plovers crying,
And daylight dying over the Malvern Hills.

Southward. Kentucky. Small fields, steep and stony;
Patient eyes staring from a rickety shack.
(I've seen those eyes in Scotland, and the one cow bony,
And the stunted crops, raised with a breaking back.)

Mobile. Biloxi. Rose-pink water-mallow
Along the Gulf, in the marshes of Pontchartrain.
(The marshes of Kent are smaller; their creeks run shallow;
Their mallow-blooms are paler and wet with rain.)

The grazing lands . . . It is only the size that varies.
Mind's eye sees colour and shape, but has no scale:
It can gather the length and breadth of Nebraska's prairies
On the fells of Yorkshire, hard by Arkendale.

The orchards of Michigan and Minnesota
Are Hereford apple-orchards in blossom-time;
And, climbing the long Black Hills of South Dakota,
It is still the Monadhliath that I climb.

But here, in the South-West, opening my eyes on
Vermilion mesas rising from painted sands,
I have found at last a land with a new horizon,
A land which holds no echoes of other lands.

Here are cactus and thorn, with nightmare flowers;
Basalt and gypsum; trees long turned to stone.
Over the dried arroyo the red cliff towers:
Here is nothing familiar, nothing known.

Silence, and sun, and sand. The lizards flicker.
Ghostly and restless rolls the tumbleweed.
The eyes that gaze from the scattered huts of wicker
Are the secret eyes of an ancient and secret breed.

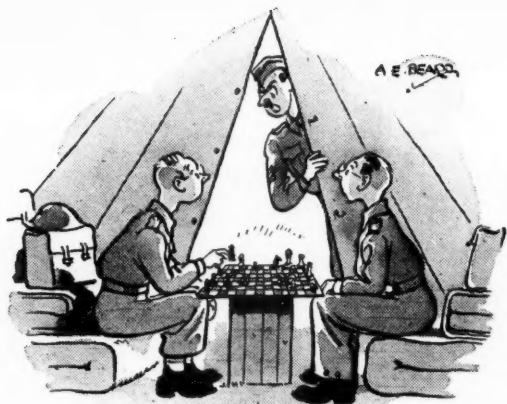
This is a country of dream, a world enchanted,
Improbable, fantastic, a wild release.
Here, and here alone, I can walk unhaunted.
I shall stay here long. Strangeness, at last, brings peace.

JAN STRUTHER.

H. J. Talking

YOU may possibly wish to know something about my methods of literary composition, an example of which this is, and how I wrote it was through a speaking-tube. We found one in the house when we bought it and it led from the bathroom to the front porch. I always find that I get my best ideas while the bath is cooling off, but this is not a time when it is decent to dictate, and if I try to write myself the steam enervates the typewriter, so the only thing to do is for me to have B. Smith on the front porch with his ear glued to the tube, though callers, blizzards, etc., are apt to distract his attention, and he also gets various occupational diseases such as earache and a stiff neck, the tube being fixed rather low down on the door-post.

Many people are of the opinion that literature needs to be learnt and does not just come naturally like eating. Knowing that many writers train themselves by copying the styles of other writers and then presumably taking an average, I once tried this method but could find only three books in the house, my wife having taken the others to furnish an office she had. The three books were a volume of *The Quiver*, *Tristram Shandy* and *Huckleberry Finn*. I tried hard to form a style on these models, but it was uphill work. When writing I find it very difficult to refrain from quotation, and this is because at school, instead of learning *The Golden Treasury* by heart we learnt *Bartlett*, and while this made my mind well stored in the extreme, I am apt to quote while thinking what to say. I have tried various methods of dealing with this, one such being instructing B. Smith to cut out quotations,



"Gambling, eh?"

and this is a great labour for him as I seldom remember to dictate quotation marks, and he has to look up each sentence to make sure it is original. As a scientist I also tried to forget *Bartlett* on scientific principles, and, Freud having shown that we forget things which have unpleasant associations for us, I made B. Smith bang me over the head with the book every morning. I thought it might help if I got a man of the same name to run away with my wife, but in response to my advertisement only one applied, and on meeting her the fee he demanded was excessive.

My first introduction to literature was when it occurred to me to compose a story for a boys' paper, scientific interest being my major aim, and to save time I combined my memories of various stories I had read in my youth. It was about some prehistoric monsters, and they lived in a cave and a balloonist found them and taught them chemistry, and they went by rocket to a school where the headmaster was really a foreign spy, and they sprayed everybody with a mixture that made them go back two hundred years, and the headmaster was hanged at Tyburn, and then the balloonist used a bit of chemistry he had not taught the monsters and fossilized them and some Arctic explorers also came into the tale. Nobody much would buy it so, as a present to my wife, I had a hundred copies specially printed and bound very expensively in pink leather. It was illustrated by the only artist in the family, and he was mainly interested in drawing cowboys, this being very valuable as I had omitted them from the book, and for once illustrations made a book more complete instead of just covering the same ground as the text.

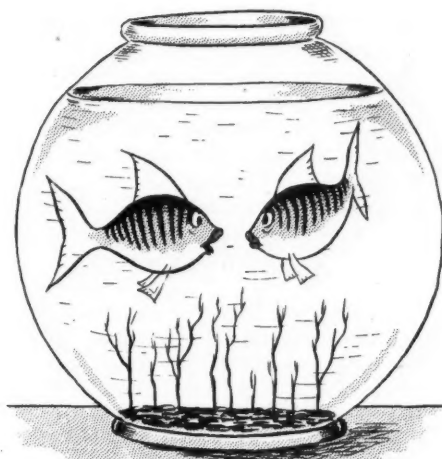
I have mentioned an office of my wife's and behaved is what I am to mention that she had this in connection with a photographer's business which she once started, having a large selection of unusual backcloths, but she grew careless and after a photograph showing the children of the local vicar in the grandstand at Newmarket trade declined. She tried to revive it by giving a free gift to anyone who had three or more photographs taken and by so doing she greatly depleted our house, refusing to buy gifts specially for the purpose as this would reduce the profits and lead to bankruptcy, and among the free gifts she gave were several cakes she had once cooked and never used, and a Patriotic Clock, the face being that of Lord Kitchener, and his moustaches forming the hands.

One of my chief troubles in science is the way mathematics

come in everywhere. Nowadays, you can't enjoy yourself boiling chemicals in a test-tube because you know that as soon as you have done you will have to work out sums about them. When I began science most of my articles were description, and when I was forced to mention figures I always safeguarded myself by putting "circ." after them, but now no leading scientific journal will publish anything that is not correct to two places of decimals, and some really do not like words at all, the editors being able to count, but not to spell; so, now the good old days when the answer to a problem was just something simple like "Yes" or "Off and on" have gone, I go in more than I should wish for statistics, and these are done specially for me by a statistician called Nobby Robinson, and he is the only man I have ever met who did ventriloquism without meaning to. He would be talking away and suddenly his voice would come from the other side of the room. He also had a habit of talking aloud, and when these two habits occurred together befogged is what he frequently was. He once had a job writing little poems to put inside crackers, but it was soon discovered that he was not really the kind of poet they needed, and I will now quote to you one of the poems which he wrote:

"The saw has gone rusty," the House Surgeon said,
As he made a false start on an out-patient's head,
"But what do I care when I'm young and I'm free
And there's music and laughter and honey for tea?"

The way Nobby Robinson got into statistics was this. He had a friend who remembered things for money at smoking concerts, and it was Nobby's job to slink in the background and ask the right questions, among these being the distance from London to York and the height of the Nelson Column. He also made a corner in graphs, of which he drew two hundred and forty and copyrighted them, and anybody who used his graphs had to pay him a royalty. If they refused he could usually find a graph which looked much the same, and in court, if the general shape was similar, he got a verdict, little squiggles not counting. He was very useful to me, having many ideas for good experiments such as finding out what kinds of music appeal to what kinds of snake, middlebrow being what most turned out to be.



MAURICE McLOUGHLIN

"... Then I was transferred to the E.W.S."



THE BEST MAN

Songs of the Censorship

Angelina

I THINK the trouble started when
Miss Angelina Spy was ten.
Perhaps it was when she was nine
(Which furnishes another line).
Well, anyhow, somewhere around
This bally birthday she was found
Beneath the aspidistra-stand
With piles of letters in her hand.
She'd opened them and read the lot,
Although aware that they were not
Addressed to her.

From that day hence,
In spite of constant punishments,
The thing became a steady Vice.
Miss Spy was apprehended twice,
But judges, when she stood in court,
Pronounced it neither Crime nor Tort.
(It seems the Laws of England are
Remiss in this particular.)
So Angelina used to pry
With absolute impunity.

(Some moral obloquy, no doubt,
But nothing more.)

Then war broke out—
Announcements by the B.B.C.
Asked ladies of integrity
To join the Censorship at once.
For Angelina this was bunce,
Right up her individual street,
Since amateurs could hardly beat
A virtual professional.
They took her on at once. I shall
Attempt no itemized survey
Of how the lady found her way
In rapid strides, without a slip,
Right to the top of Censorship.
Let me but say within one year
That dame knocked back a thousand per.

* * * * *

Which proves, I think, that morals are
Quite different in Peace and War.



UNWELCOME ADDRESSES

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done

Tuesday, September 29th.—House of Lords: The Noble Lord Mottistone Follows Tradition.

House of Commons: About Commons—the Other Sort—and Food.

Wednesday, September 30th.—House of Commons: Mr. Morrison Gives an Exhibition of Life-Saving.

Thursday, October 1st.—Both Houses: Controversy Reigns.

Tuesday, September 29th.
—Lord MOTTISTONE, famous general in the last war, was celebrated for his dash and daring. He is also a noted student of military history. That is important to our story, as they say in Hollywood.

To-day he raised the question of arming Britain's male population—or, as he insisted, *training them to handle arms*—in case there is an invasion. His Lordship has raised it before; more than somewhat. He wants everyone in the land to have the ability to shoot an invader or more.

But this time he had a new trump card concealed, with the technique of the Heathen Chinee of poetic fame, up his capacious sleeve. He had discovered that the Royal Air Force Regiment has been able to produce excellent defenders of airfields in precisely a quarter of the time it used to take; in a mere forty hours, instead of 160. So, slightly adapting the motto of the National Savings Movement, of which he is President, Lord MOTTISTONE urged all to "*Learn to Defend the Right to be Free.*"

Very eloquent and moving, he was. Lord NUFFIELD, with his unrivalled knowledge of large-scale organization of men, had undertaken to him that if this training-for-all plan were adopted it could be carried out without the loss of a single hour of production. Lord MOTTISTONE's *bête noire*, the Government's "Advice to Civilians in Case of Invasion" (he made the Archbishop of YORK wince by referring to it as "this cursed document"), had urged people to stay put and do nothing. No, no, a thousand times no! roared "Fighting Jack" SEELEY,

forgetting his new name of MOTTISTONE and apparently about to recite a little piece about going once more unto the breach.

Instead of quoting Shakespeare (or was it Henry V?) he cited the "vibrant words" of Lord SIMON, sitting, blushing, on the Woolsack, to the effect that everyone worthy of the name of Britisher would show fight, international law notwithstanding. Getting thoroughly rough, he described the author of the Government's printed advice as a "fool." The Archbishop winced again.

The vast majority of the men of the

mistakenly referred to as the "Mills bomb."

Lord DONEGAL wanted "associate members" of the Home Guard (clad, apparently, in armlets), and Lord CROFT, Under-Secretary for War, reinforced by the watchful if silent presence of Lord-High-Home-Guard Viscount BRIDGEMAN, Director-General, proceeded to turn down the whole idea—everybody's ideas—with official completeness. "Twouldn't work, he said. 'Twould only result in the wrong people getting shot by the wrong people, and a general mess-up. The Home Guard—"bastions," he called them—were getting all the arms that could be spared and knew well how to use them.

Lord MOTTISTONE looked more and more grim. More and more stern. More and more determined. More and more defiant.

As Lord CROFT sat down, with a "That's-that" expression, Lord MOTTISTONE rose again.

Fixing the Minister with a frosty stare, he announced that issue was clearly joined and that he would force a division.

Lord CRANBORNE, leading the House, retorted that that was a "little bit unreasonable" and applied for quarter. Galloper Jack folded his arms like a film villain, looked straight before him.

Then up he got again, asking for "an assurance," which Lord CRANBORNE promptly refused. Still with the same relentless expression on his face, Lord MOTTISTONE saw in this the chance of "Peace with Honour." Lord CRAN-

BORNE seemed to find this too good to be true and, having again firmly refused to be any more accommodating, he showed no additional surprise when Lord MOTTISTONE adjudged this final justification for dropping the question and abandoning a division. Proving, as one noble Lord put it, that the tongue is mightier than the sword.

Lord MOTTISTONE went out (so rumour had it) to look with admiration at the statue of his new hero, the Noble Duke of YORK, who, with 10,000 followers, had performed much the same feat as his some time before.

Mr. CHURCHILL told the Commons the brief and glorious tale of our occupation of the Isle of Madagascar,

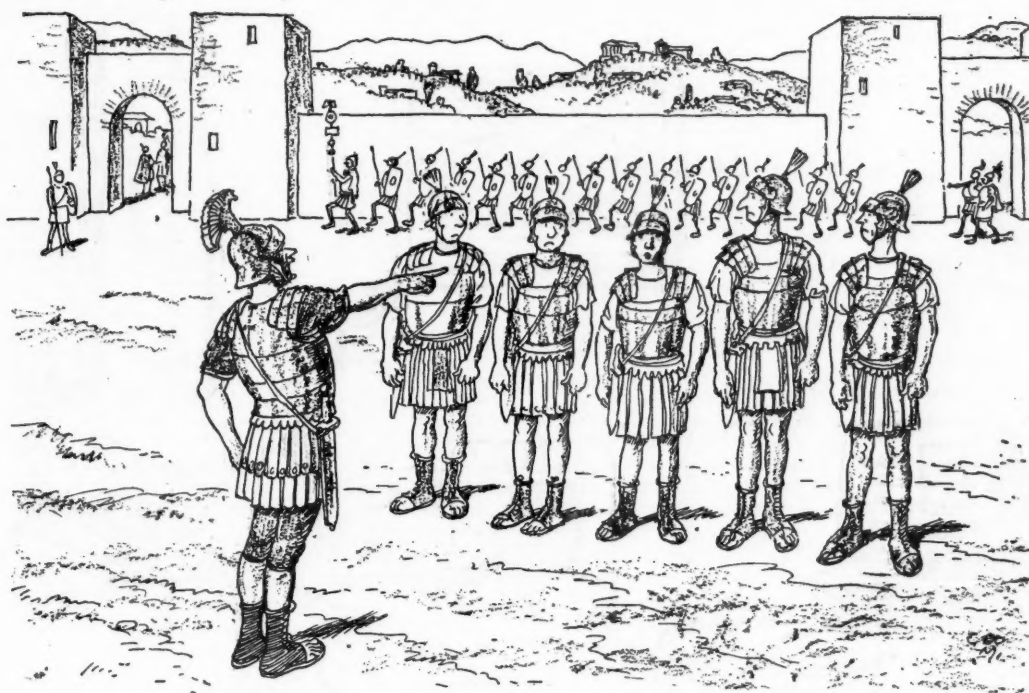


"To arms!" cried Mottistone, and couched his quivering lance."
From "*The Bard*," by Thomas Gray (revised version).

["Clearly every man must be trained to arms."—Lord Mottistone.]

land were doing their duty, but there were—there were—"scrimshankers." The Archbishop covered his eyes.

Lord CORK, who had listened with rapt attention, asked (to the delight of those who had visions of a new kind of salvage drive) what *new steps* the Government now had in the *melting-pot*. Lord MANSFIELD, with something of the manner of the lecturing zoologist, explained with patient care that all this talk about civilians was beside the point, because to the Axis there ain't no sich thing. He wanted every male from fourteen to "as old as they can stagger" trained in the use of Tommy-guns, rifles, Browning-guns, and the weapon several peers



"And in future address me as 'Centurio'—NOT 'Cent.'"

and then Lord WINTERTON insisted that our commons and waste land should be used for the raising of crops in these hard times.

Mr. TOM WILLIAMS, for the Ministry of Agriculture, mentioned that not a few parks and commons had already been sown with Dragon's Teeth, producing the traditional crop of armed men, complete with camps, but promised that what more could be done, would be.

Which seemed to please everybody so much that they all went home, this time with the complete approval of Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS.

Wednesday, September 30th.—The Home Secretary, Mr. HERBERT MORRISON, administered a further dose of the elixir of life to Parliament to-day, hiding this neat piece of magic under the prosaic title of the Prolongation of Parliament Bill, Second Reading.

He made it clear that "if it can be avoided" there will be no General Election while the war lasts, mildly pointing out that a rain of bombs was not precisely conducive to calm choice between contending policies. If, indeed, sufficient contention could be summoned up to make a contest

possible. And if it were safe to take the risk of summoning contention—which is apt to get out of control once freed from its cage.

A convincing case, the House thought it, and although there was much argument, there was no real difference of opinion on the main point that while it is fighting for the nation's life, Parliament must keep its own.

So the Bill passed. Your scribe thought he heard a sigh of relief go up from the relieved.

The rest of the day was unexciting. *Thursday, September 30th.*—Those who think Parliament lacks vigour should have been in either House to-day.

Up in their Lordships' House there was quite a to-do. Armed—at any rate oratorically—to the teeth, noble Commando leaders had a few crisp things to say to Lord STRABOLGI over an article he had written for the American Press criticizing the British Army.

Lord LOVAT, hero of the beaches of Dieppe, led the Parliamentary attack with the same unconventional daring as he uses on a military raid. He did not spare Lord STRABOLGI and invited him to make the same statements to the Commandos direct, offering him the

hospitality of the nearest horse-trough as reward. There was a refreshing schoolboy flavour about Lord LOVAT's eloquence, mixed with the earnestness of a man who has seen a lot of life in a short time.

Many others peers joined in the scrap, with Lord WEDGWOOD as Lord STRABOLGI's sole supporter—apart from Lord STRABOLGI.

There was plenty of hard hitting, but politeness was the rule throughout.

As a distinguished American who heard the debate said to your scribe: "I give up. You British are beyond me. I won't try any more to understand you—I'll just admire you."

Major GWILYM LLOYD GEORGE, Minister of Fuel and Power, was the centre of the Commons controversy. He explained with lucidity why we must be cold in the coming winter. Apparently it is essential if we are to make it hot for the Axis. Although there is plenty of coal there are not enough men or transport, and everybody is using too much anyway.

Mr. D. R. GRENFELL, former Mines Secretary, made the speech of his career in reply, and it is clear that when the debate is resumed there will be quite a piece of trouble for someone.



"They HAVE made a good job of repairing the wireless—I could hear it at the bottom of the road."

Co-ordination

THE Minister told the Police Chief
To watch for fires at night,
The Chief then told the Super
To make things watertight,
The Super told the Constable
To see that things were done,
The P.C. told the Special
To rope in everyone.
The Special told the Fireman
To note the various streets,
The Fireman told the Warden
To organize the beats:
The Warden told the Old Folk
What they would have to do,
And so who fights the fire-bombs
now?
Why, Grandma—ninety-two.

Little Talks

I STAND for the Four Equalities.
I beg your pardon?
Equality of Opportunity, Equality
of Intellect, Equality of Character,
Equality of Beauty—

But here! Hey! Steady on!
You can't be against me?
*No. But, I mean — Equality of
Intellect, and so forth. You can't—*
We're all agreed nowadays that
there must be Equality of Opportunity,
aren't we?

Of course.
But it must be obvious that it's no
use giving a chap Equality of Opp.—
or shall we call it E.O.?—unless you
give him the other equalities as well.
*I don't see that Beauty comes in
anyhow.*

Well, leave Beauty out, then. Every
man's career is really the result of a
sort of triangle—Opportunity, Intel-
lect, Character. And you've only
got to do a spot of psychological
trigonometry—

What in the world—
Well, I mean, every member of the
House of Commons had the same
opportunity as Winston Churchill to
become Prime Minister. Indeed, for
some time there were two or three who
had much more. But he's Prime
Minister, and the others are not.

*Ah, but E.O. must begin much earlier.
Education. Training.*

You mean Public Schools and all
that?
Yes.

Well, Winston went to Harrow, it's true. But he was always bottom of the class there, from his own account, and, I gather, didn't learn much. If you read *My Early Life*—what a good book!—you'll see that he educated himself—by reading, roaming, and resolution.

He's an exception, of course.

Nearly all human beings are exceptions. That is why too much talk of Equality—

Yes, but don't you think a bright boy who's been at a State school till fourteen or fifteen ought to be given a chance to go on—?

Certainly. If he's bright enough. And if he doesn't want to go to sea—or suchlike. Secondary School—Public School—Training College—University—whatever's the best for him.

Well, then—

Ah, but do you want every boy to go on to a Secondary School or University?

No. I suppose not. Only the bright ones. Though, of course, many boys develop late. But I see we can't send everybody to Oxford.

Then you don't really mean Equality of Opportunity?

Yes, I do.

Then you must join the Four Equalities Group. But what you really mean is Equal Opportunity for Equal Powers.

Well, yes, if you like.

But isn't that very roughly what we're getting already?

Good Lord, no! Look at the Public Schools!

All right. But half a minute. Do you realize that at the Ancient Universities, before the war, more than half the students were there on somebody else's money—scholarships, grants, and so forth?

Is that so?

It is. Maybe there's more to be done still. But there it is. Unless you say that every boy ought to go to a university, which you don't—

Well, I still think there must be thousands of bright boys who don't get as far as they should, simply because their schooling stops too soon.

Half a minute. If they were really bright, why didn't they get to the secondary school? Why weren't they at Oxford before the war?

Maybe their parents couldn't afford to keep them at school.

Maybe. Or wouldn't. I agree. That's a point. But maybe also they lacked E.I. and E.C. And in that case—

They went off to the factory. The squire's son went to Eton or Harrow.

And you'd rather they'd gone to Eton or Harrow?

I didn't say that.

Why not?

Well—

Go on.

Well—

The truth is that, like so many woolly-heads, you haven't really made up your mind about the Public Schools.

Oh, yes, I have!

Well, are they pernicious institutions from which the sons of the poor should be saved—or are they nests of privilege to which the poor should be admitted as well as the rich?

I don't think that's a fair way of putting it.

Well, is a public-school education a good thing in itself, or not?

In a class sense, yes.

What class?

The ruling class.

But isn't it a good thing that the ruling class should have a special education? Ruling, after all, is not so easy.

No, but—

And don't you want your bright poor boy to become a ruler—to make his special contribution to ruling—and to be specially educated according to his capacity for that particular—

I don't want him to have a special snob education.

Then you're against the Public Schools? As institutions? Whoever goes there?

Yes. Definitely.

Then why, just now, did you complain that the bright poor boy did not go to Eton and Harrow, like the squire's son?

Because you muddled me.

That, as I have said before, was God's work, not mine. You have E.O. but not—

No need to be offensive. You know what I mean. I want both of them to go to the same State school.

Have the State schools been such a big success? Do they produce the perfect citizen for every calling?

Not yet. Of course not.

Yet you want to send a lot more boys to them? Whether their parents want it or not?

What their parents want doesn't matter.

Oh?—This is a bit "Fascist," isn't it?

Nonsense! The public interest—

The public interest demands that every boy should go to the same school, whether it's a good school or not? Is that it?

I didn't say they weren't good.

Will these boys learn Latin and Greek at this school?

I should hope not. But why drag that up?

Because I always think, if one's

talking about education, it's just as well from time to time to consider what sort of education one's talking about. We never do in the House of Commons, I admit. We talk for hours about "one or two more years at school": but no one ever mentions what's going to be taught in those years. We talk about education as if it was beer—you just pour out another pint or two.

What are we arguing about?

If your boy went to a naval or mercantile marine school, you'd expect him to learn a little about seamanship and navigation—apart from everything else?

Certainly.

Right. And if my boy was bound for the Civil Service, the Bar, or any of the learned professions, I'd expect—and like—him to learn some Latin and Greek. It's essential. And, by the way, it wouldn't do your boy any harm, either—but then, of course, what we mere progenitors think doesn't matter. It's really a great pity the State doesn't take over the whole business of parenthood—and have done with it.

What is the point of all this?

You want to abolish the Public Schools. I don't.

You want to keep class, and class-privilege, going.

Not at all. I want to keep Education going. I believe that the P.S. is the finest thing of its kind we've got—for special purposes, if you like. But then, after a certain stage, you have to specialize. Besides, I believe in the boarding-school—as such.

The "preparatory," too?

The best of them, yes—though they want watching, I know.

I see. As usual, you want to leave everything as it is.

Not at all. I'm ready for all sorts of revolutions in Education. Send anybody you like to the Public Schools. But keep 'em. If I were contemplating a revolution in London's architecture I shouldn't begin by pulling down St. Paul's simply because it made certain foolish folk feel small. Anyhow, you'll join the Four Equalities Group?

Ass.

With which is incorporated the T.L.C.W.

Eh?

The Talk - Less - Cabbage - Water Movement. A. P. H.

"If the competitors for the next race do not come to the starting-line within ten minutes the race will be run without them."

Megaphone announcement at a County Cork Regatta.

Saves effort.

At the Play

"WALTZ WITHOUT END" (CAMBRIDGE)
"HEDDA GABLER" (MERCURY)

CHOPIN, before he left Warsaw for Paris, had a heartache for a certain young singer called CONSTANTIA GLADKOWSKA and commemorated the fact in the glum little valse in D Flat Major (posthumously published). That is all that is known about this passion—a reference in a letter to a friend. Mr. ERIC MASCHWITZ now tells us a lot more in his new musical play. Her real name was Countess WANDA WOJCINSKI, and she came down to the Warsaw Conservatoire on a spring morning in 1830 in a not-very-clearly-explained rage against music-master CHOPIN, whom she had never met. However, before the encounter, she had a conversation with a servant in green-baize apron who was sweeping up the courtyard, and impulsively told him that she intended there and then to take him back to her father's castle as her music-master, just to annoy the maestro. The footman, if you please, was *Chopin* himself, and next time we see the pair they are singing the C Sharp Minor waltz together in the music-room of the Castle Wojcinski. Another familiar piece which they practise and perform is that ineludible E Flat Nocturne which is now known as a duet called "Lady of the Moon."

There is a tragic finale to the First Act when it is made clear to *Wanda* that she must not throw away her patrician affections on a mere musician who has been masquerading as a footman. Early on in the second half, Mr. BERTRAM WALLIS turns up in the guise of *M. Pleyel*, the Parisian music-publisher, with a speech of some length and dignity about the inadvisability of *M. Chopin* marrying anybody at all, since he is the kind of artist who might allow marriage to interfere with his output. *M. Pleyel* obviously has one eye to business, even if the other one is fixed on posterity. However, he deceives everybody excepting us, and it is finally resolved that *Chopin* shall go to Paris wedded solely to his art, and that *Wanda* shall

marry an ancient but thoroughly patrician Count who has been in the offing all the while. The hapless lovers sing farewell for ever in a duet called "Paris in Spring," which is the middle section of the familiar D Flat Waltz (though we have always till now been given to believe that this was the waltz inspired by watching GEORGE SAND's little dog trying to bite the end of its own tail). Finally, we see *Wanda* married in Warsaw Cathedral while a full chorus and orchestra deliver a noble snippet out of the B Flat

other such horror which we hesitate to suggest lest the idea be seriously adopted. Your musical-monger, like HABAKKUK, is capable of anything. The décor and the performance at the Cambridge are agreeable, though it seems a little odd to have the svelte and aquiline young CHOPIN looking sturdy and stout and remarkably like SCHUBERT without his spectacles.

The new *Hedda* at Notting Hill is Miss SONIA DRESDEL—a grave, handsome, and highly expressive actress who understands the part very thoroughly and conveys as much of it as her supporting cast will allow.

Of her fellow-players only the *Tesman* of Mr. MICHAEL OLDHAM can truthfully be called more than adequate.

"People don't do such things!" says *Judge Brack* at the end of the play when *Hedda* commits suicide. IBSEN in his stage-direction asks the *Judge* to murmur this, half-fainting with horror. The *Brack* of this production is positively beaming with a good-natured incredulity as the curtain comes down.

A. D.



GIVING HIMSELF AIRS

Wanda MISS JANE CARR
Chopin MR. IVOR SHERIDAN

Minor Sonata to the words "Gloria in Excelsis."

Now one has to be a Chopin-fervent to resent all this, or to observe that sundry light choruses and catches are exquisite études sung to infantile words in a wildly distorted tempo. But there are many thousands of musical-comedy lovers who will love every minute of *Waltz Without End*, and come away from the Cambridge asking if this charming composer is already at work on another show. So it is as well to keep cool on the subject, and try not to hope for the worst—for example, *The Belle of Bonn* (to a winsome score by Mr. BEETHOVEN) or

Madness bringing
Quintessence
Of metallated pain.

So let me soothe my ear
With other music—hear
The wakening of birds,
Wind in the rushes and a stream that tries
To swamp its stepping-stones; the plop
Of curious trout that rise
To view their vision's rounded top.
Then will I listen,
My senses fasten,
When passion's heat is spent
To the cool-fingered words
Of after-love and be content.

Short Leave

I HAVE heard long enough
the roar,
The shrill cacophony
By aero-engines thrown
Through helmet, earpiece,
bone
Into the shrinking brain,
And would no more
Abuse my gift of sense
With this loud ringing,

Barrack Damages

AT Mistham the men of my detachment were billeted in a house called Poona, and when we arrived there a month ago I spent a whole morning with a man who called himself the S.A.Q.C. When first commissioned one is constantly running up against officers who hide their identity under initials representing their purpose in life. At first I used to ask them modestly what their letters stood for. In this way I discovered that G.E. stood for Garrison Engineer and that A.D.L. stood for Assistant Director of Labour. But I found that these questions gave away the fact that the dew, as it were, was still on my pip, so I just accepted this S.A.Q.C. man in a non-committal sort of way.

"Ah!" I said, "so you are the S.A.Q.C."

"Yes," he replied, "I've come to March You In."

As we were already comfortably settled in the billets this seemed a little superfluous, but I offered to take all the men out into the streets, if he really required it, and let him march them back again.

"I mean," he explained, "that I must go over the billets with you and check over all the deficiencies and damages, so that when you move out your men will not be charged with barrack-room damages beyond what they actually do."

The S.A.Q.C. and I spent a whole morning on the job. We went from attic to cellar, room by room. He had an enormous document of many pages containing a list of all the damages and deficiencies that were left when the previous detachment went out, but most of these had since been made good, and this complicated matters considerably.

"Cracked ceiling," he would say, as we passed into the seventh bedroom, "agreed?"

"Agreed," I said wearily.

"Why," he said indignantly, "it's been repaired! Were you trying to pull a fast one on me?"

I assured him that I was not. I was merely rather dizzy after three hours of looking at cracked ceilings and broken windows and defective locks and missing beading and fused bulbs. All I wanted to do was to get away and see that my sergeant was building the huts we had come to build, in the right field.

We both nearly went mad in one room which was supposed to contain a cupboard with six shelves missing.

There was no cupboard, but there were six shelves, and we had reached a state of complete nervous exhaustion before we discovered we were in the wrong room.

A month later, when we moved out, the S.A.Q.C. came again, and the whole dreary process was repeated.

As the weather had been warm, my men had not used any floorboards or other woodwork to light illicit fires, and I hoped to get away without them having to pay for any damages.

"Where are the seven brass coat-hooks?" said the S.A.Q.C. accusingly, in the very first room.

I murmured uneasily that surely he wasn't going to let a few hooks spoil our beautiful friendship, but he wrote them down with a sort of gloomy satisfaction, and we found, as we continued

our search, that every brass hook in the place, forty-seven in all, had gone.

When he told me what brass hooks cost I fetched all the men back from work and searched their kits. Not a hook was to be found.

"Unless these hooks turn up," I said severely, "you will all be on the peg."

Corporal Foulsham laughed boisterously, which he never does when I make intentional jokes, but the rest of the men looked glum.

We had moved on to the next place when the sergeant came back from leave and told me he had removed all the hooks and hidden them under a floorboard to put temptation beyond reach of the men.

When I can find out what an S.A.Q.C. is and where our one lives I will write and tell him.





"Eighteen inside, twenty-three on top."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

An American in Paris

BALZAC says somewhere that Englishmen travel so much because everything is better out of England than in it, whereas Frenchmen stay at home because their own country contains every thing a man can desire, and always at its best. It is certainly rare for a Frenchman to fall in love either with England or with the United States, and very common for Englishmen and Americans to become infatuated with France. Possibly, however, it is French self-satisfaction rather than French perfection which attracts more imaginative, less complacent nations. In an uncertain world there is something reposeful and consoling for certain temperaments in the solid conviction of the French that they understand how to live, and that no one else does. It would be unfair to Mr. ELLIOT PAUL to suggest that his book (*A Narrow Street*, CRESSET PRESS, 10/6) expresses an entirely uncritical devotion to France. An American journalist, he is well aware of French defects. "Never in the history of France," he writes, "had the ordinary citizen received good service of any kind," and he instances the railway system, the post office, the water, the lighting, and the disastrous complications which arose when dial telephones were installed. But these defects, like faults in a woman who is loved, endear France still more to him. Much of his book deals with recent French politics and French politicians, whom he excludes from his general enthusiasm, but its real interest resides in the

author's loving account of the Rue de la Hachette. It was in 1923 that Mr. PAUL discovered this street, which is in a district of Paris bordering the south branch of the Seine. It fascinated him at once, and this book is a tribute to its inhabitants—"the finest and bravest and most companionable of men and women." They are all here, from the priests to Madame Mariette, proprietress of "the neighbourhood bordel," whom Mr. PAUL describes as "an interesting and beautiful woman, with genuine understanding, wide experience and something deep inside her that no man has yet aroused or even touched." During the Spanish Civil War, he tells us, she wept and bit her lips for shame over Monsieur BLUM's inaction, and after Munich her eyes had no more tears. A little sensibility over matters within her control might have been more to the point, but this would not occur to Mr. PAUL, who is apt to be emotional at the wrong moment. He has, however, a genuine talent for description, and has found a subject which gives it full scope.

H. K.

Rumi

Business men do not, as a rule, acquire land in order to till it and live on it. In Peru, at any rate, their object is to dispossess those who do, so that a once self-supporting community may become available as "labour." And because, as its English publishers suggest, this process is not confined to Peru, Señor CIRO ALEGRIA's great novel on the Indian evictions—it won the Latin-American prize last year—is a magnificent contribution to the cause of freedom everywhere. Its sagacious and lovable hero, *Rosendo Maqui*, is mayor of the village of Rumi. Against the peaceful abundance of Rumi's traditional way of life are arrayed not only the "Reds" and "Blues" of the neighbouring towns, but a local magnate, *Don Alvaro Amenabar*. *Don Alvaro* has "interests." His friends have "interests." Rubber, wool, silver, coca—all of them need "hands." *Rosendo* warns Rumi against the plausible overtures of these several roads to serfdom; and his village is (legally, of course) confiscated. He leads his people higher up the Andes . . . but his Homeric legend must speak for itself. Intimate and magnanimous—its endearing domestic detail magnified rather than dwarfed by an ineluctable doom—*Broad and Alien is the World* (NICHOLSON AND WATSON, 9/6) has the makings of an international classic.

H. P. E.

A Fig for Gravity

Mr. GILBERT FRANKAU's short stories have plots. This is of course a most provocative remark: nobody minds about novels, but there is a good deal of feeling about what a short story should or should not have. Gloriously indifferent to the conflict, Mr. FRANKAU provides lavishly, in his *Escape to Yesterday* (HUTCHINSON, 8/6), for the hundreds of people who merely require event to follow event as fast as possible, and no questions asked. Here are fourteen tales, none of which anyone else could have written. When you deliberately defy probability, which is rather like getting free of the law of gravity, it takes skill to keep the bits of your story from flying apart in all directions. Here, in fact, the various bits are persuaded into orderly but fantastic combinations: the hearty city man who is miserably unable to pick a horse, a pretty lady, or a play; the film-star and the dowager; the two young gentlemen whose ancestry makes them fight with swords; the obliging money-lender; the amateur kidnapper who comes of the very best people. Do not judge the world by them, or you will think it even more extraordinary than it is—a world in which even the speech is different, a hundred times more highly-coloured and polysyllabic, a juvenile

and elementary world. But if you poke about beneath the extravagances and the archness and the artifices that are not enchanting, you may find signs of a knowledge of character that will not be suppressed. A man may fly in the face of Nature, but when he bases a story, however far-fetched otherwise, on the abhorrence of two criminals for each other's crime, he has not entirely done with her. J. S.

A Man Possessed

Between the nightmare coherence of the dream that produced *Jekyll and Hyde* and the deliberate manufacture of the macabre that engineered *The Killer and the Slain* (MACMILLAN, 8/6) there is an unbridgeable gulf. Sound workmanship has been put into Sir HUGH WALPOLE's posthumous thriller, and an impassioned interest in ideas of good and evil. But inspiration, felt on and off as an imminently available power, seldom actually strikes one as operative. The tale portrays a *Jekyll and Hyde* who are two component parts of the normal man and, in this case, live simultaneously. *Talbot*, a dilettante antique-seller turned novelist, is virtuous and weak; *Tunstall*, a painter married to a plain rich wife, is wicked and strong. From their childhood at a Glebe-shire grammar school, *Tunstall* has treated *Talbot* to a kind of spiritual ravishment; and this becomes so degrading that *Talbot* kills *Tunstall*—only to find that the evil personality is effectively freed to complete the invasion of his own. The reader faced with this grisly programme gets even less comfort than *Talbot* from the rest of the cast. The wretched man's wife is cold and commonplace; his oppressor's is a tenderhearted prig; and even the inevitably attractive WALPOLE dog provides occasion for the crime that brings down the curtain.

H. P. E.

Before Waterloo

In *Pride of Race* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 8/6) Baroness ORCZY gives us another English hero who holidays abroad for the purpose of playing dangerous games with foreign politics. *Graham Piers-Wyndon* is not such a lace-flicker as *Sir Percy Blakeney*, and not so demn'd elusive and lazy-seeming either, though he has plenty of good looks and fopperies. We meet him first at the eighteenth birthday party of *Donna Veronica d'Estaing*, whose grandmother was scheming to raise a rich army for Napoleon (then in Elba) and to make the girl its price. Naturally *Graham* fell in love with *Veronica* and naturally the scheming Duchesse did not handle his money-bags. It would spoil the exciting plot to describe how he handled them himself, or the risks he ran of being accused of trafficking with the enemy, or the hells his lady ran once she had decided to love him. The pace of the book may be slower than that of its predecessors, but the author writes as ably as ever of the swashbuckling times when the course of love was as rough as the roads, spies were spies, plotters she-devils, little ladies lovely, and gallants smooth as silk to them. B. E. B.

Far East

NINA FEDOROVA declares that existence without positive hardship and sorrow is a poor incomplete affair and the vacuity of mere comfort the climax of evil, but the rigours of such a creed are mitigated for her readers—in *The Children* (COLLINS, 9/6)—by what would seem to be her own sneaking preference for a quiet life, since her most attractive characters all achieve a "happy ending." This novel, in which very many surprising people emerge for a moment of vivid description only to disappear without accomplishing anything in particular, is concerned with White China

under Japanese domination, and the threat of a second world-war drawing visibly nearer. The Russian refugee population is seen in final poverty but not greatly depressed in spirit, living on tea and mutual borrowing, but not the least abated in a chorus of speculative philosophizing. They all regard a proposed removal to this country, where it is assumed that life will soon become impossible under German bombing, as an infinitely hazardous adventure outside the safe limits of China. The author includes a gruesome description of a flooded town along with her bundle of character-studies, and is eager to comment on the interplay of fantastically mixed nationalities in a strange environment; but the principal impression left by her writing is that of a kind of quick happy intimacy with lively passionate folk who really have so far brushed away some unneeded conventions as to become sublimated beyond material considerations. They are fascinating creatures, if at times a little difficult to distinguish one from another.

C. C. P.

Wild-West History

A crowd of cowboys, from OWEN WISTER's *Virginian* to the latest who flickered across the sight of a cinema audience, have swaggered through romance in the last half-century; the newer cow-girl seldom seemed authentic, but in *No Life for a Lady* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 15/-), AGNES MORLEY CLEAVELAND has drawn her from the life, for her book is an autobiography. Mrs. CLEAVELAND's mother, ill-advised, bought, when her children were quite small, an extremely large ranch in New Mexico, and in their teens young AGNES and younger RAY took on most of the responsibility of looking after the "VV cattle." Sandwiched between spells at school and college were days and nights of hardship; driving cattle was part of the day's work for this well-read sensitive daughter of a brilliant father, and she thought nothing of spending weeks alone at an outlying camp miles from anywhere, while hunting grizzlies was merely entertainment. Her lively and delightful book is full of humour and pathos, and of men and animals in their habit as they lived during a phase of American life now vanished for ever.

B. E. S.



"I'm banged if I can immobilise it!"



"But there's no question of petrol—I'm running on ten thousand torch batteries."

The Wicked Flourish.

"I'VE got a watch noo," announced young Podgy McSumph excitedly, holding up his new possession, obviously a well-preserved antique from some Victorian toy-shop.

"So you have, Podgy. Where did you get it?"

"An' mind ye, it goes," said Podgy.

He turned the knob, and both hands moved together and at the same pace.

"Whit time is that?"

"It's a quarter to five, Podgy—just about tea-time."

Again he made the hands move rapidly. "An' whit time's that?"

"It seems to be a quarter to five still."

"Ay, but it's no' the same. Because I've turned it a lot o' times an' it's to-morrow noo."

"My goodness, it's a magic watch, Podgy!"

"An' just you wait," putting in some vigorous work on the knob. "Noo, whit time is that?"

"It's nearly ten minutes to one."

"But when?"

"It might be the middle of the day or the early morning."

"Well, it's no'. Because I've turned it nearly a hunner times an' it's nearly next year."

"And who gave you this wonderful watch?"

"It was auld Mrs. Slatts," replied Podgy. "An' noo I'm goin' to make it a lang, lang time," whirling the hands furiously through the years. "This time it's to be when I'm a big man an' ready for the sodgers."

"Will you take your watch with you when you are a soldier?"

"Ay," said Podgy, "for tellin' when it's time for us to get up for the

battles. Me an' Willie Pilkie. Because he's got nae watch."

"Did old Mrs. Slatts give you a present of the watch?"

"Ay," said Podgy. "Whit time does the battles start?" preparing to adjust the hands.

"But tell me first of all, why did Mrs. Slatts give you a present? It isn't your birthday yet."

"She said," mumbled Podgy, hanging his head as if reluctant to discuss the incident—"she said it was for me catchin' her budgie an' puttin' it back in its cage."

"But, Podgy, little man," I exclaimed, "you mustn't be ashamed of that. That was a good deed you did. You know what a good deed is?"

"It's like the boy scouts," said Podgy. "Does sodgers get watches for good deeds?"

"They get medals sometimes."
 "Whit for doin'?"
 "Well, you might, for instance—you might save the general's life."
 "But I'm to be the general maself."
 Pulling myself together I said airily, "But you are only a little boy yet, and so you got a watch. And you were a good boy and I am very proud of you."
 "An' should everybody get watches for a good deed when they're wee boys?"
 "Oh, well," I replied vaguely, "it all depends. You see—"
 "Because whit way did Willie Pilkie no' get a watch?"
 "If he had done a good deed he might."

"But it was him that done it."
 "Did what?"
 "Because," mumbled Podgy, his head drooping again, "it wasna me that caught her budgie an' put it back in its cage; it was Willie Pilkie."
 "Willie Pilkie! And d'you mean to say—? Podgy McSump," I said sternly, "you will go round at once and give that watch back to old Mrs. Slatts. And you will say to her that it rightly belongs to Willie Pilkie."
 "I will not," retorted Podgy dourly, "because it's mine noo."

"Podgy," I said gravely, "do you know that in keeping the watch you are nearly a thief?"

"But sodgers gets stealin' things from other sodgers."

"Look, Podgy," trying persuasion, "it was bad of you to keep the watch, but if you give it back, then you will be good again."

"But," objected Podgy, "I'll have nae watch left."

"And this—"

"An' besides," nodding his head mysteriously, "maybe I'll no' be good neither."

"And this," I sneered—"this is the boy who thinks he is going to become a general."

"But," protestingly, "Willie Pilkie'll just go an' tell her."

"Willie Pilkie can only tell her the truth, that it was he who put her budgie back in its cage."

"But," giving me a dark look, "maybe he would tell her mair."

"What more could he tell her?"

"He could tell her it was me that let her budgie oot its cage. Because so it was," confessed Podgy, and, the watch gripped tightly in his hand, he made off.

I did not try to detain him. D.

Bad Example

"It was reported that certain of the Civil Defence Services had taken part in area competitions at Hertford."—*Herts Paper*.

Do Bring Your Violin.

JUST for a start
 let's play this lovely little Mozart.

You realize I haven't practised for ages?

Never mind. I will turn the pages.

Yes. . . .

Well, what about a Bach cantata,
 or a Schubert sonata?
 Both of them go rather slowly
 because they are holy.

Oh, dear. And we went oh
 so lento!

Well, would you care to try
 Tosti's Good-bye?

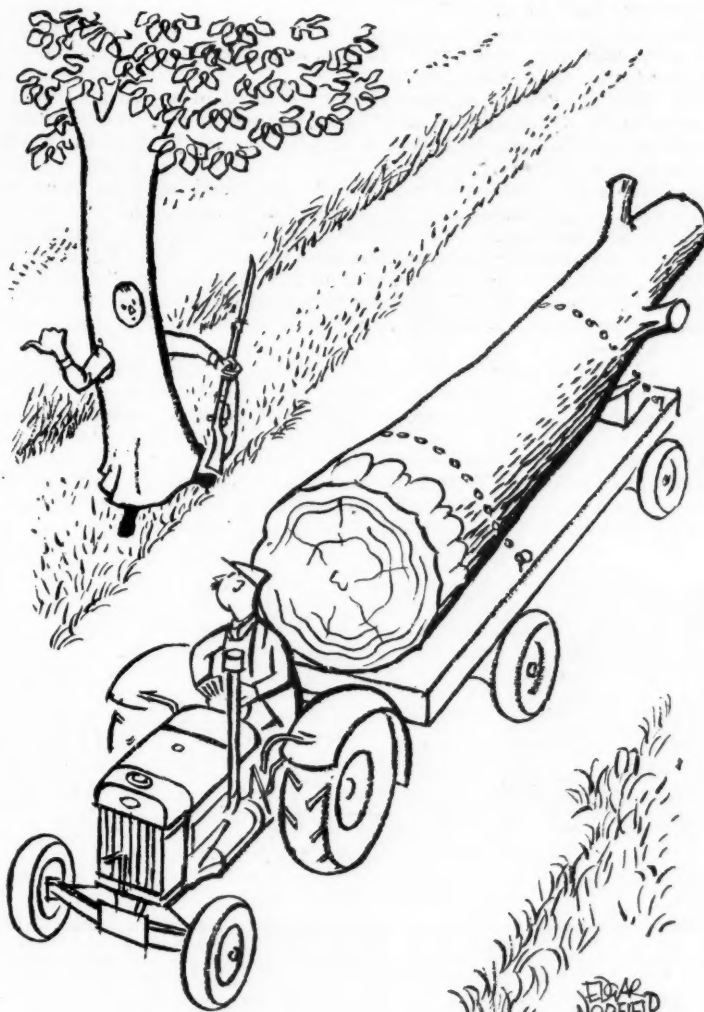
Or shall we have a go
 at Poor Old Joe?

That was grand,
 but *why* only one hand?

Now this little thing was written
 by Benjamin Britten,
 supposedly for a flute and seven harps,
 but it has *no* sharps
 and the piano is silent after the first
 chord.

Oh, Lord!

No one can say
 we do not play
 My Little Grey Home in the West
 with zest. V. G.



Aunt Tabitha at the Bench

IT was with a mixture of stupefaction and indifference that the rest of us learned of my Aunt Tabitha's spare-time job in a factory. Her thin uncle, inclined as ever to be captious, refused to believe that she could really have passed the elementary training tests without some kind of jiggery-pokery.

"It is my opinion," he observed, "that there are at this moment somewhere on the vast battle-fronts of the Empire guns that will not fire, tanks that fall over, planes that fly backwards because you, my dear girl, put a screw in the wrong way up or misremembered the coefficient of linear expansion of borosilicate glass."

My Aunt Tabitha said: "If it were possible to get screws in the wrong way up I might have tried it. One gets impatient with the everlasting sameness. A moment's reflection, however—"

"It would be possible," her fat uncle said, "if you made the holes bigger, to accommodate the heads instead of (on the other hand) what we call the shanks."

"What you call the what?"

"Shanks."

"You're welcome," said Aunt Tabitha's great-great-aunt Maud, waking up with a start.

Aunt Tabitha's eldest great-grandfather ventured in a quavering tone: "The coefficient of linear expansion of borosilicate glass, distasteful though a man of sensibility must find the subject—"

One of the cousins home on his first leave here found it necessary to give his imitation of the sergeant-major, just as Aunt Tabitha's fat uncle observed reflectively that even if the holes were made bigger to accommodate the heads of the screws, they (the screws) would tend to fall out when the object in which they were placed was turned upside-down, as could not but be expected to happen in circumstances such—

"Oh, well, never mind," he concluded sulkily, for the imitation of the sergeant-major was having some success.

"But what do you do?" someone asked Aunt Tabitha at length.

"I am just a cog," she modestly replied.

Slight uproar followed this remark, because far too many of us were immediately inspired to make some crack about her being frequently oiled. Not till the last echoes of these

witticisms had died away did Aunt Tabitha add: "I produce tubes from sheet-metal on a bending roller."

"What makes a roller bend?" her thin uncle at once inquired. "Is it the same thing that makes a roller skate?"

"Oh, no, not at all," Aunt Tabitha said vivaciously. "One so often finds that disastrous misconception; our respected manager was at pains to correct it over the air only the other day, when our lunch-hour entertainment was broadcast for the intimidation of the mob. A roller skate—"

"Speaking of misconceptions about skate," interjected her youngest great-grandfather, "there are still more about sole. There is a popular idea, no doubt fostered by the phrase 'a feast of reason and a flow of sole,' that sole is a drink. This idea may also have been encouraged by the well-known Shakespearean quotation, addressed, I fancy, by Agamemnon to Achilles in a play in which, presumably, they both appeared—'Grapple them to thy heel with stoups of sole.'"

One of us was heard to remark that he did not believe Achilles' heel had any connection with sole; but another of us observed very justly that it must have had some, or Achilles would have fallen over. In less time than it takes to tell we were all chattering away happily about uppers, and the whole unfortunate affair would have been, if not forgotten, at least gone, had not Aunt Tabitha's great-great-aunt Maud been moved to comment that she would not have cared if Achilles had fallen over.

"A most disagreeable man, as I recall," she said. "Sulky."

"Achilles was a heel," said our American cousin.

"Constantly falling over would be enough to make anyone sulky," said Aunt Tabitha's thin uncle. "I well remember when I was first on a roller skate—"

"I cannot too strongly emphasize the fact that it is impossible to produce tubes from sheet metal on a roller skate," Aunt Tabitha interrupted, "as our respected manager pointed out only the other day. A bending roller, on the other hand, is just the thing."

Her fat uncle said sardonically that he could well believe it, and our talk veered to other topics; but nobody was ever the same again—or not for long. Fortunately.

R. M.



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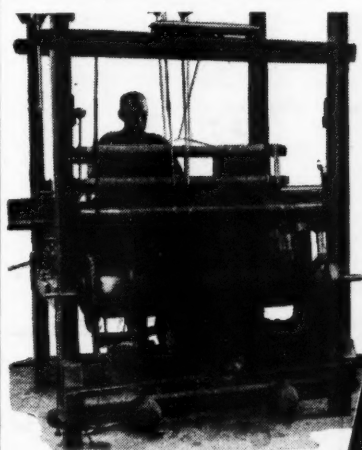
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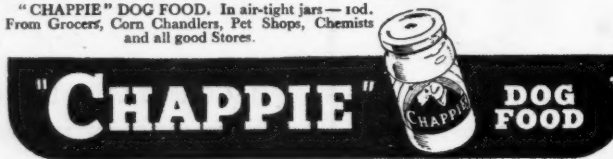
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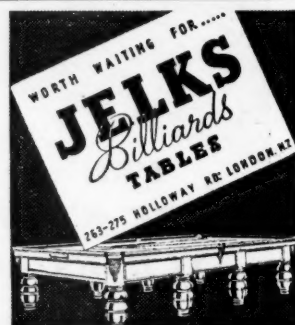
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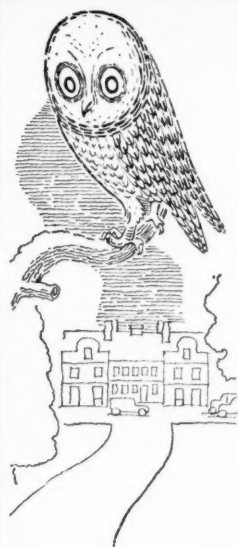
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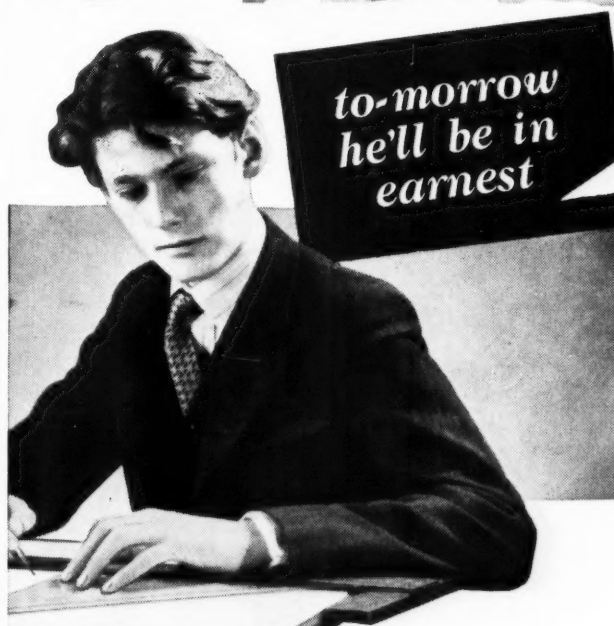
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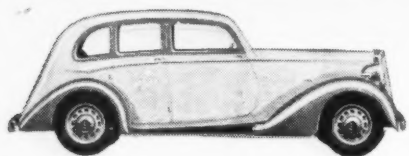
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